



## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

September 22, 2003

### **PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Ward Miller, Executive Director, (847) 918-5260  
Steve Mountsier, SMC Chairman, (847) 381-6943  
Sara Agahi, Sequoit Watershed Planner, (847) 918-5272  
Susan Vancil, Public Information, (847) 918-5265

### **SEQUOIT WATERSHED RESIDENTS INVITED TO PUBLIC MEETINGS ON WATERSHED PLAN, FLOODPLAIN MAPS**

Libertyville, IL – Local elected officials, residents and business and land owners in the villages of Antioch and Lake Villa, and in the townships of Antioch and Lake Villa are invited to a public meeting sponsored by the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC) on the draft Sequoit Watershed Management Plan and the separate floodplain mapping project. The public meeting for the draft watershed plan is set for Wednesday, October 22, 2003, 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Antioch Township Hall, 1625 N. Deep Lake Road, Lake Villa.

A public open house is scheduled to give people the opportunity to view their individual properties in relation to the new floodplain study's proposed floodplain boundaries. SMC staff will be available to assist interested people on Monday, November 10, anytime between 5:00-8:30 p.m. at the Antioch Township Hall.

"This is another opportunity for citizens to ask questions about the stakeholder-

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based plan and goals, and about the updated floodplain mapping process. Share with us your comments and concerns and we will address them,” said Ward Miller, SMC executive director.

SMC began the Sequoit planning process in 2001. The entire planning process has been and still is an open forum to anyone living in the watershed, including local elected officials, homeowners, business owners, the development community and environmental interests. Thirteen public meetings have been held so far over the past year during the day and evening to meet the needs of stakeholders. Local officials have been involved in this planning process since day one. According to Miller, SMC’S job during the watershed planning process is to provide an open planning process, to provide guidance – not mandates – for local governments and entities regarding wise development, to monitor current flooding and set goals not to increase it through new development, and to protect natural resources. SMC has no zoning or growth management powers. Watershed planning does not impinge on economic growth, said Miller.

“Watershed plans do not include any growth restrictions. Our job is advisory, to provide the framework for locals to guide new development and economic growth based on the best available information about the watershed and thus, the drainage system,” said Miller.

The Sequoit plan will only be adopted once all comments are received, and considered by SMC and the County Board, said Miller.

### **How was Sequoit chosen for a management study?**

SMC has prioritized the county’s watersheds based on population projections and growth, existing flooding, and on the existence of natural resources like wetlands and floodplains. The Antioch/Lake Villa area population is expected to increase 60% by the year 2020. At the same time, this watershed is blessed with valuable natural resources that are important for our tourism economy and quality of life, said Miller.

### **The Benefits of New Floodplains Maps**

A separate project, and product, from the watershed plan is a new floodplain study and new floodplain maps. Sequoit Creek’s floodplain maps, studied and created

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by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), are dated 1980. That marks the year FEMA undertook the area's first floodplain study to delineate floodplain boundaries based on land use information at that time. The result was a set of floodplain maps.

If you look at the maps today they say 1997, which is the year the maps were merely reprinted, not restudied. Local units of government in the Sequoit watershed have been using maps over 20 years old to plan for and approve new development. A new study and new floodplain maps will reflect land use changes and changes to the natural drainage system since 1980. As a side note, the Sequoit watershed area, covering roughly 13 square miles, was part of a state declared flood disaster area in 1993 and part of a Presidential flood declaration in 1996, Miller added.

"Costs prohibit us from paying for a new restudy and maps of the entire county on a regular basis. Our strategy is to restudy and remap the same areas we've recognized as "high priority" watersheds. The result is a comprehensive look at the watershed and with a clear picture of where floodplains exist and consequently, where flooding is likely to occur," said Miller.

Based on state-of-the-art methodologies, SMC produces draft maps but then they are forwarded to IDNR and FEMA for technical reviews, and are the focus of another public review comment period and subsequent adoption.

Copies of the Sequoit Watershed Plan are available for viewing at Lake Villa and Antioch public libraries, and at the Lake Villa and Antioch township offices. In addition, you can view the entire plan at SMC's website at: [www.co.lake.il.us/smc/sequoit](http://www.co.lake.il.us/smc/sequoit).

### **SEQUOIT WATERSHED FACTS PER THE DRAFT PLAN:**

- 1,691 acres of high quality wetlands make up 21% of the watershed
- 8 lakes including high quality Deep and Cedar lakes
- State declared and Presidential declared flood disasters areas in 1993 and 1996
- Current Federal Emergency Management Agency floodplain maps while reprinted in 1997 have not been restudied to reflect current conditions and

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development since 1980, when the very first maps were completed

- Dominated by a significant number of hydric soils predominantly in areas served by septic systems

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#### **COMMUNITIES AND PORTIONS OF THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITIES ARE IN THE SEQUOIT WATERSHED (SEE ENCLOSED MAP FOR BOUNDARIES):**

Antioch

Lake Villa

Antioch Township

Lake Villa Township

#### **MEMBERS OF THE SMC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:**

Steve Mountsier, County Board District 17 (Chairman)

Tom Adams, Village of Green Oaks

Anne Flanigan Bassi, County Board District 23

Bonnie Thomson Carter, County Board Dist. 5

Steve Harris, Village of Deerfield

Milt Jenson, Village of Beach Park

Jim Krischke, Village of Lake Zurich

Ann Maine, County Board District 21

Tim Perry, Village of Grayslake

Bob Sabonjian, County Board District 8

Tom Skinner, Village of Lake Bluff

Mike Talbett, County Board District 19

#### **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

Twelve commissioners – 6 mayors/village presidents and 6 County Board members – govern SMC per state statute. A staff of 18 carries out day to day activities. Key areas of SMC's countywide program include implementation and monitoring of the Lake County Watershed Development Ordinance, watershed management planning and plan implementation, flood hazard mitigation, rain gage network maintenance and operation, natural resource protection, and public education and outreach. The agency's FY'03 budget is \$2.3 million and is based on a mix of property tax and grants.